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# C.I.A. Said to Warn Publisher on Book

By EDWIN McDOWELL

Random House officials say that William J. Casey, Director of Central Intelligence, and an employee of the National Security Agency both made "disturbing" inquiries about a forthcoming book by Seymour M. Hersh that deals with the shooting down of a Korean Air Lines jetliner in 1983 by a Soviet fighter.

Both the publisher and the author said Mr. Casey also telephoned Mr. Hersh to say that the book, "The Target Is Destroyed," might violate Federal law.

Mr. Hersh, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter and author, and Robert L. Bernstein, the chairman of Random House, strongly denied that the book — scheduled for publication in September — violates any laws.

"Although Mr. Casey and other Government officials may be embarrassed by Mr. Hersh's book, I am satisfied its publication is in the national interest and is entirely lawful," Mr. Bernstein said yesterday.

## Did Not Know Contents

Mr. Hersh said he was perplexed that Mr. Casey issued the warning although the Director acknowledged he did not know the contents of the book. "There's nothing in it the public should not know, and there's nothing

that will help the Russians in any way," Mr. Hersh said.

A C.I.A. spokesman said yesterday, "We don't confirm or deny allegations concerning the director's private phone conversations."

The call to Random House was placed to Robert Loomis, the book's editor, shortly after the call to Mr. Hersh, according to Random House officials.

"He said that the law said we could not publish material about communications intelligence and that it was his job to uphold the law," Mr. Loomis said. When the editor replied that Random House had no reason to believe the book contained any classified information, Mr. Casey replied, according to Mr. Loomis, that it didn't make any difference, it was illegal to publish any information about communications intelligence.

Under Federal law, it is a crime to make available any classified information obtained by communications intelligence — that is, information obtained from the interception of communications — from any foreign government.

Mr. Bernstein said the important word is "classified." Random House, he added, "has done everything possible, short of submitting the book to the Government for censorship, to assure that we are acting both lawfully

and responsibly in publishing Mr. Hersh's book." He added that it is "especially disturbing" that Mr. Casey "would call our editor and exaggerate the reach of the law that he said that he must uphold."

## N.S.A. Seeks Book Galley

Last Wednesday, the day before Random House said Mr. Casey made his telephone calls, the publishing house's sales department received a call from a man who identified himself as William Meyer of the National Security Agency. He asked for a copy of the galley of Mr. Hersh's book, saying he would like to read it because the agency planned to buy copies of it.

When Mr. Loomis telephoned Mr. Meyer the next morning, the official repeated his reason for wanting a galley of the book. "He said that this was the first time he had contacted a publisher directly and that he had been authorized by his superiors to do so," Mr. Loomis said. The editor told Mr. Meyer that Random House would not distribute galleys of the Hersh book, pre-publication rights to which have been sold to Atlantic magazine, nor would it ship bound books until the magazine article appears.

A spokesman at the National Security Agency, where there are several employees named William Meyer, said she would try to obtain confirmation that one of them telephoned Mr. Loomis, and would inquire about the kinds of books the agency purchases and in what amounts. But she did not return the telephone call.

Mr. Bernstein said Random House has never before been contacted by the National Security Agency about buying books. "It is clear that the transparent approach by the N.S.A. 'book buyer' and Mr. Casey's follow-up calls are linked," he said.